



NEW APPROACHES TO CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY

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- **Jennifer Hellerud**, Deputy Director, San Diego County Department of Child Support Services
- **Ashley Joslyn**, Program Specialist, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services



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Focus Groups and Branding Implementation Plan

- I. Background, Research
Objective and Methodologies
- II. Key Findings
- III. Conclusions & Next Steps





Branding Research Objective

The objective of the research was to uncover current perceptions, attitudes and feelings about DCSS among various audiences.

This research will help define the DCSS brand and develop a message platform that will serve as the foundation for organizational activities, and internal and external communications.

Methodology Overview



Media Audit

Communications Audit of Five States



Website and Materials Audit



Informal Focus Groups with Employees & Partners

****Please contact me if you would like to see any of these items****

Informal Focus Groups with Employees & Partners

- 121 participants, male and female (ethnically diverse)
- Public focus groups held in English and Spanish
- Representative of 17 counties
- Conducted exercises similar to those used in the consumer groups to uncover key brand themes
- Partner groups were in Los Angeles and Fresno



Brand Essence Findings

It's about **failure**: of a relationship, a failure of marriage, of birth control, of judgment, of one's ability to provide for one's family, etc.

It's **public, like a scarlet 'C'**: It unmask "deadbeat dads" and "baby mommas."

"If rent is not getting paid and I have to tell the landlord, it's all out there." – Female

"You go to jail and there's no time to get on your feet before child support asks for money. It's like a set-up. You end up being a habitual offender, and it's a felony. It's real stressful." – Male





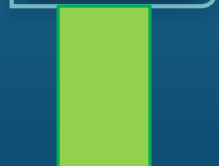
Public Focus Groups

We asked all 78 people
the first word that
comes
to mind when thinking
about DCSS...





...not **one**
person
mentioned
family, parents
or children.





The words most often mentioned have to do with how and what (not why): “money,” “paperwork,” “bureaucracy” and “government.”



Many words focused on financial outcomes: “unfair,” “not enough,” “unpredictable” and “debt.”



Only five people had a positive word come to mind: “helpful,” “financial support,” “supportive,” “smooth” and “liaison.”





So, we asked about
the ideal DCSS;
the DCSS of the future.





The Fundamental Realities:

The focus group research indicated that the fundamental realities that overlay the entire child support system are

Failure

Misunderstanding

Complexity

Program Legacy





The Goal

Positioning: Position the child support system as the “middle ground;” a neutral, non-judgmental, “go-to” resource for child support help and information.

Normalization: Normalize child support as just one of the many resources and services available to parents – a simple fact, not a failure.





Market research has proven that there are certain concepts that will consistently motivate audiences. These motivating concepts are:

Freedom and Learning - some people need to feel free of authority or influence, and others want to feel smarter or wiser.

Stability and Structure - some people are highly motivated by anything that makes them feel safer and more secure.

Connection and Belonging - if you have a teenager that HAS to have what their friends have, you understand this one.

Challenges and Results - some people dislike something about life/self and want changes or wisdom to make it better.





The Image of Child Support

The next step is to define the archetypes that people associate with these motivating concepts.

Brand archetypes are universal, relatable symbols and ideas. A company's archetype will evoke the feelings the company wants associated with their brand.

An archetype is identified by reviewing all of the words that focus groups use to describe a product, to find a dominant theme.





Child Support Archetypes – The RULER

Our focus groups gave us **bureaucracy**, **powerful**, **control** and **stability** when describing Child Support Services. These words identify **the Ruler**, an archetype that resonates with those who desire Stability and Structure.

All archetypes have a negative side, and Rulers can be **arrogant**, **inflexible** and **rigid**, which we also heard often from the focus groups.





Child Support Archetypes – The RULER

The goal is what's best for the community: **The Ruler** offers security, protection and stability. Child Support does this for BOTH parents – helping a payer comply with an order offers protection and stability as much as getting money for a payee offers security and stability.

Microsoft is a Ruler brand – offering everything you need to do your job and run your life successfully.



Child Support Archetypes - The MAGICIAN

Relevant, informative, life-changing, and **facilitator** are words that were used to describe an ideal Child Support Services, and these words define **The Magician**. The Magician motivates those who long for Challenges and Results - in short, to change their lives.

This archetype promises all kinds of wonderful things, but negatives include **manipulative, untrustworthy** and **liar** - all connected with the perception of *broken* promises.





Child Support Archetypes - The MAGICIAN

The Magician promises knowledge and change. Child Support Services empowers parents and can reframe difficulties. We help our customers grow wiser and positively influence their situation, offering a way out of failure to competence.

Every cosmetic company is a Magician brand, but so is Tesla. Buy a Tesla, and the world's environmental problems will be solved.





The Brand Manifesto

Child Support Services offers a professional, approachable, non-judgmental “middle ground” for parents and guardians to get informed and ultimately transform a challenging situation into a path forward.

We are committed to helping parents navigate services available, ensuring children are provided for and promoting peace of mind through information and action.



Key Messages

A focus on children, happy families and positive parenting is not a credible message

What motivates us is NOT what motivates them

We offer benefits TO PARENTS:

- ✓ Child Support Services keeps the records
- ✓ Child Support Services keeps things on track
- ✓ Child Support Services does the work for you
- ✓ Child Support Services can be a go-between
- ✓ Child Support Services helps, encourages, and guides





Thank you! Questions will be held at
the end of the session or contact me at

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San Diego Dept. of Child Support Services





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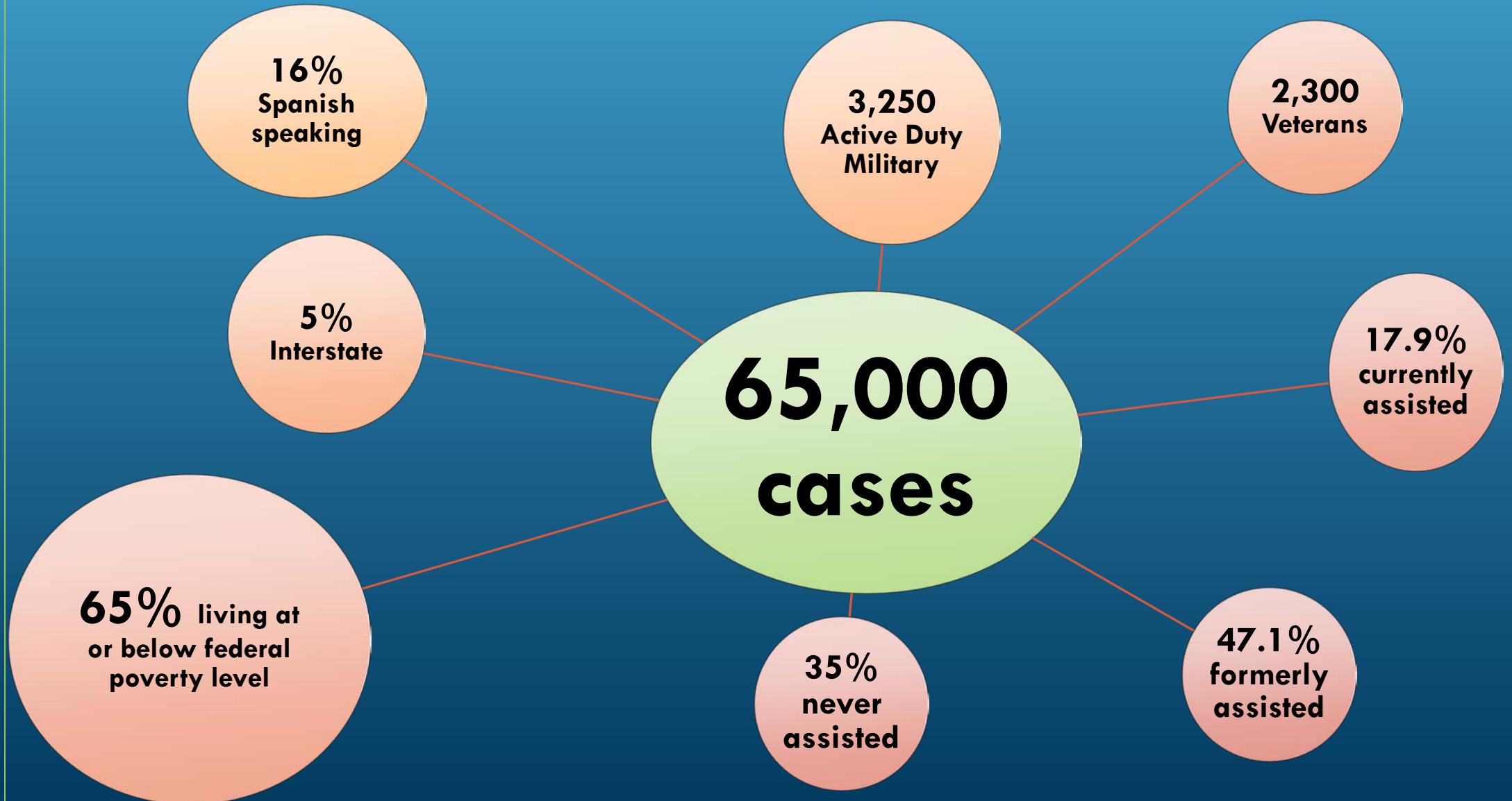


SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CA

SOUTHERN MOST COASTAL, INTERNATIONAL BORDER AND LARGE MILITARY PRESENCE.



SAN DIEGO'S CASELOAD

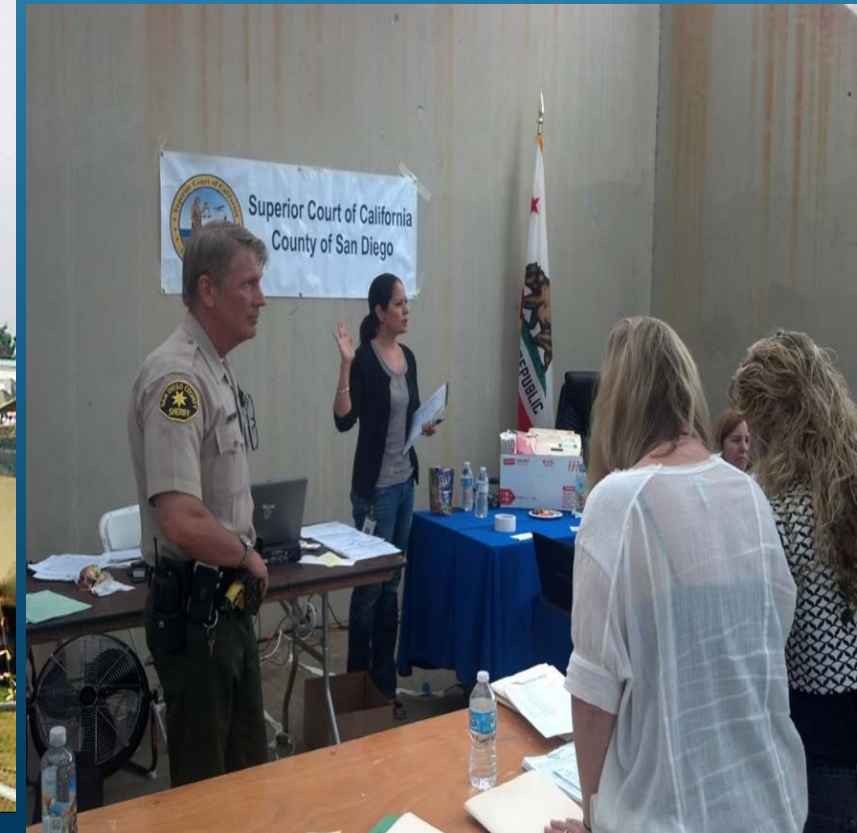


OUR CUSTOMERS REQUIRED US TO THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT SERVICE DELIVERY



MILITARY VETERANS IN OUR CASELOAD

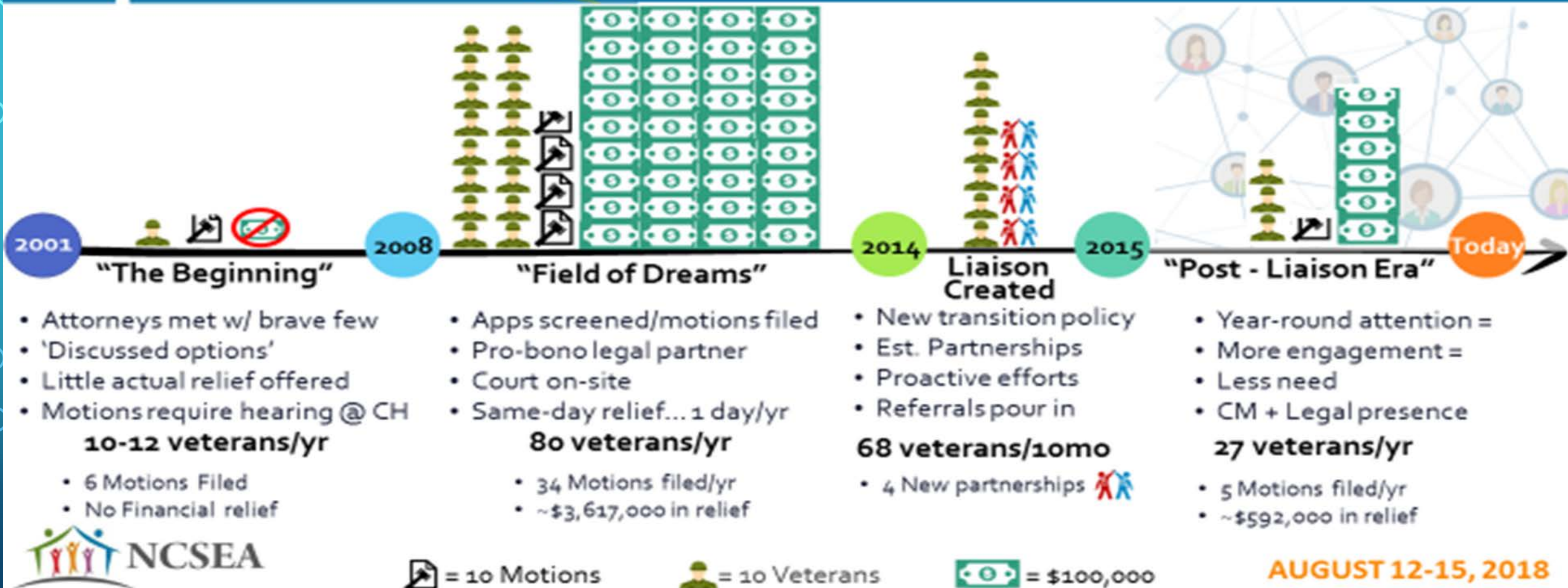
-STAND DOWN





EXPANDED SERVICE DELIVERY



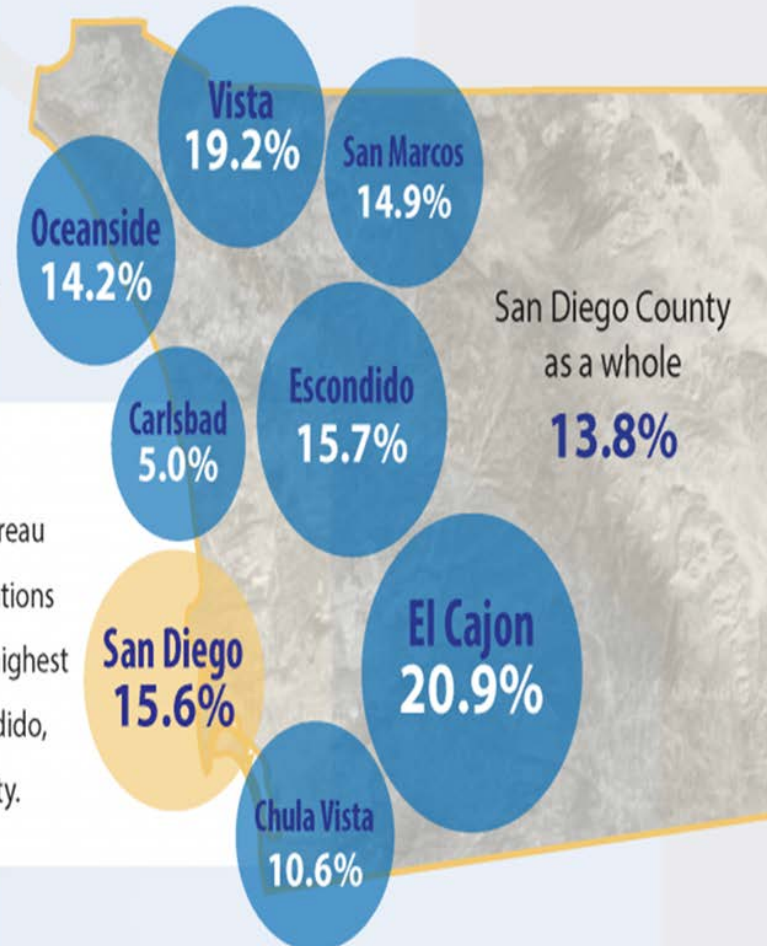


Total financial relief provided 2009 – 2018: \$4,209,087.51

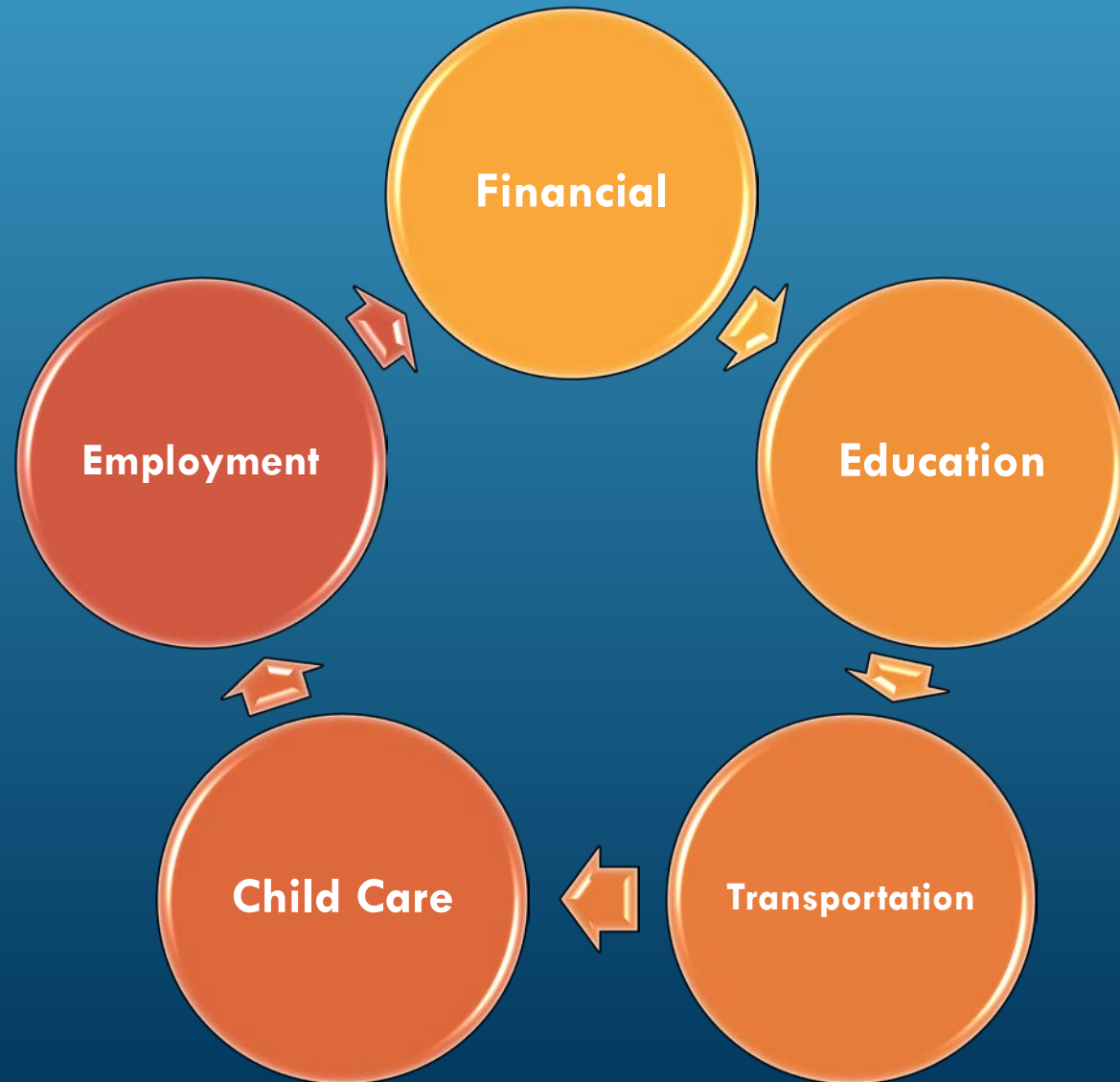
PERFORMANCE HAD PLATEAUED...WHAT MORE COULD WE DO?

Poverty Rates in the Cities of San Diego County

The overall poverty rate for the County of San Diego in 2015 was 13.8%. The Census Bureau reports poverty data for all cities with populations larger than 65,000. The three cities with the highest poverty rates were El Cajon, Vista, and Escondido, all located in inland areas of San Diego County.



THE BIG 5 BARRIERS





CHILDREN IN POVERTY IN THE U.S.A.

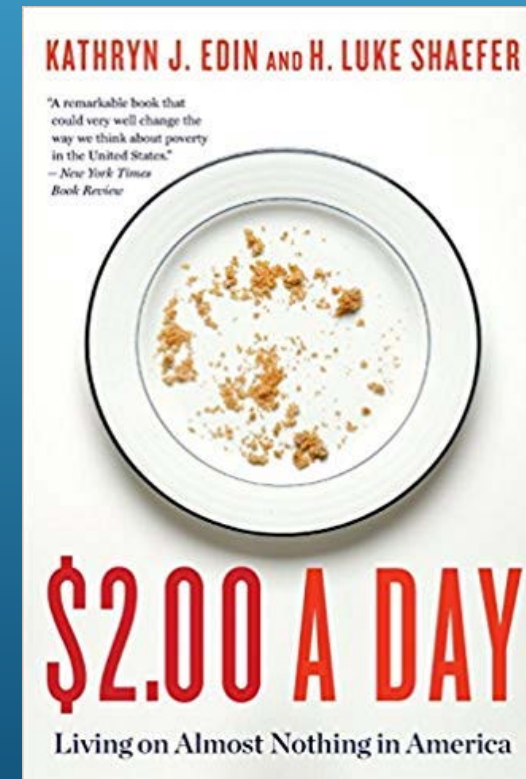
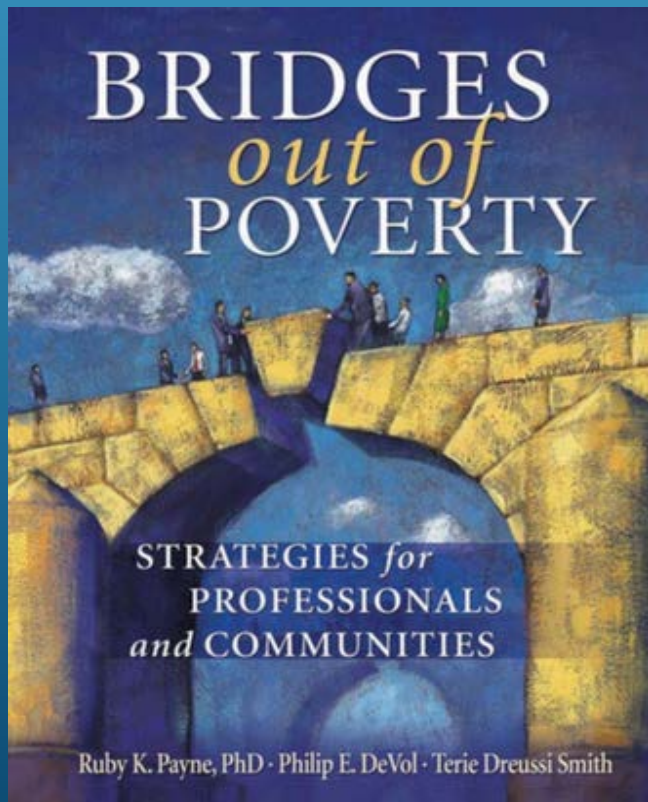
In the year 2016, 13.3 million or about 1 out of 6 children lived in poverty.

In 2016, children represented 32.6% of the people in poverty in the U.S., but only 23% of the population.

Childhood poverty increases the chance that a child is:

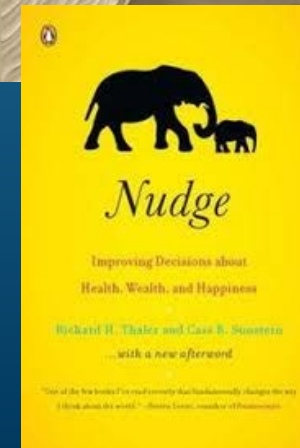
- Less likely to finish high school
- More likely to be poor
- Less likely to be working as a young adult.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION





IMPROVED OUR LOOK AND COMMUNICATION





COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

Partnerships in the Community

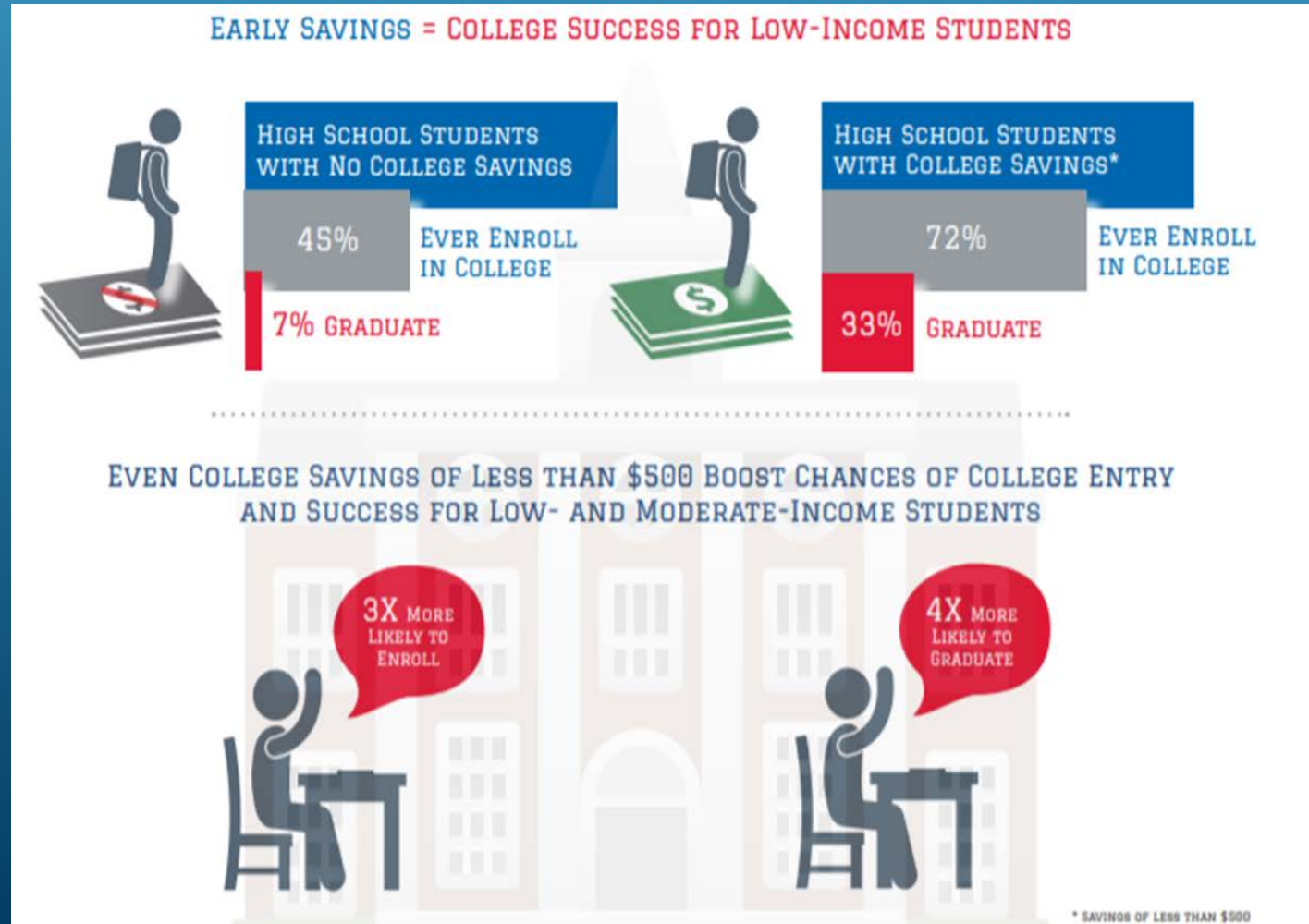
- 2-1-1
- SAY San Diego
- Second Chance
- Drug Court
- Homeless Court
- Veteran's Administration
- Veteran's Village of San Diego
- St. Vincent de Paul
- San Diego Rescue Mission
- Interfaith
- Alpha Project
- Salvation Army
- PATH
- SD County Probation Department
- SD County Sheriff Department
- Family Law Facilitator
- Health and Human Services Agency

SAN DIEGO
WORKFORCE
PARTNERSHIP



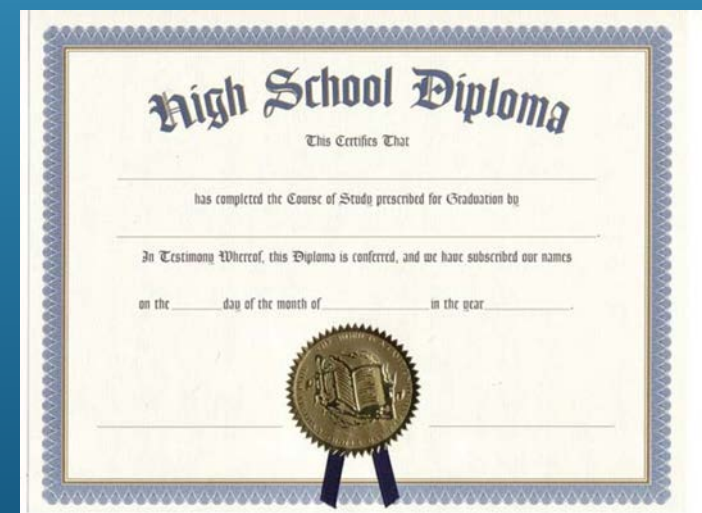
sandiego**countylibrary**

PARENTS INVESTING IN EDUCATION (P.I.E.)



HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PARTNERSHIP

37%





SAN DIEGO DCSS COMMITMENT



**Help today for a
successful tomorrow by
empowering our team
to have a positive
impact.**



THANK YOU!



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**DON'T
FORGET
TO BE
AWESOME**



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Shifting the culture from transactional to relational

- Customer Service Training Track
- Holistic, person-centric approach



The Customer Service Training Track

- ❖ Verbal De-escalation
- ❖ DCS Customer Service
- ❖ Mental Health First Aid
- ❖ Bridges out of Poverty
- ❖ Motivational Interviewing.





Verbal De-escalation

Minimize or eliminate verbal crisis by using and applying the learned skills and understanding of both verbal and non-verbal communication. Provide employees with a new set of skills they can draw on in their daily life that empowers them with strategies of authority and tact:

- Active listening skills to react with calmness
- Engage in proactive Calming Strategies
- Understand and cue in on body language
- Learn the A, B, C's of emotional control
- Diffuse anger by utilizing both body language and verbal calming techniques





Customer Service

This class sets standards of behavior for delivering excellent customer service to both internal and external customers. The class provides a framework and techniques for managing customer interactions so that every interaction brings value for our customers and has a positive impact on the success of the Division.



Mental Health First Aid

Internationally recognized training program adapted for use in the United States by the National Council for Behavioral Health. It is a classroom training program designed to teach laypersons how to help others (a customer, a co-worker, a family member) who are experiencing a mental health crisis. The course helps individuals to effectively identify, understand, and respond to signs of addiction and mental illness.





Bridges Out of Poverty

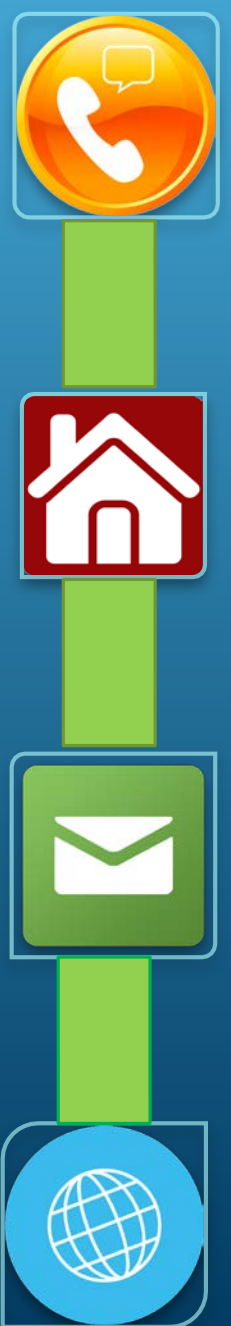
If you didn't grow up in poverty, you may be unaware of the 'hidden rules' that govern many aspects of life for the poor. People in poverty are often in 'survival mode' and support systems taken for granted in middle class and wealth are largely nonexistent for those in poverty. The Bridges out of Poverty training takes a comprehensive approach towards understanding the dynamic that causes poverty and why it's so hard to get out of it. Learners will reflect on ways they experience economic class, explore how it affects their perceptions of people and groups, and build a deeper understanding of the challenges and strengths of people living in poverty.





Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing is a person-centered, directive approach to case-management that is designed to reduce ambivalence and increase motivation to change. It involves a collaborative approach that respects individuals' autonomy.



Holistic, Person-centric Approach

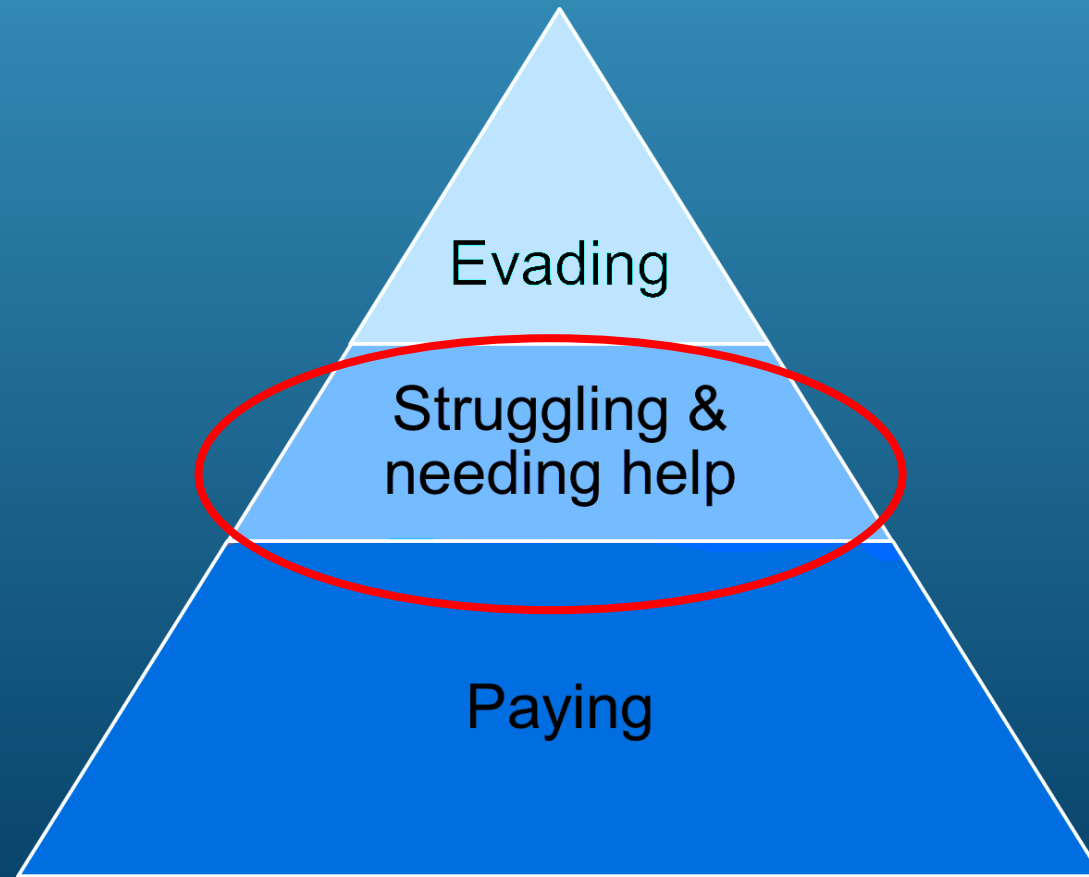
The Alternative Solutions Program

“Building Capacity in Parents”

Mission:

Making families and communities stronger by connecting parents to resources and partners

Alternative Solutions Program client demographic





Removing Barriers

- Substance Abuse
- Mental/Physical Health
- GED/Post-secondary Education & Training
- Child Care
- Transportation
- Housing
- Legal Assistance, LFOs, License Release
- Employment

Alternative Solutions Case Management

- Intake/Referral – What Are Your Barriers?
- Voluntary, Cooperative Individual Solutions Plan
- Child Support Barrier Removal & Stabilization
- Ongoing Navigation – Connections to Barrier Removal Services



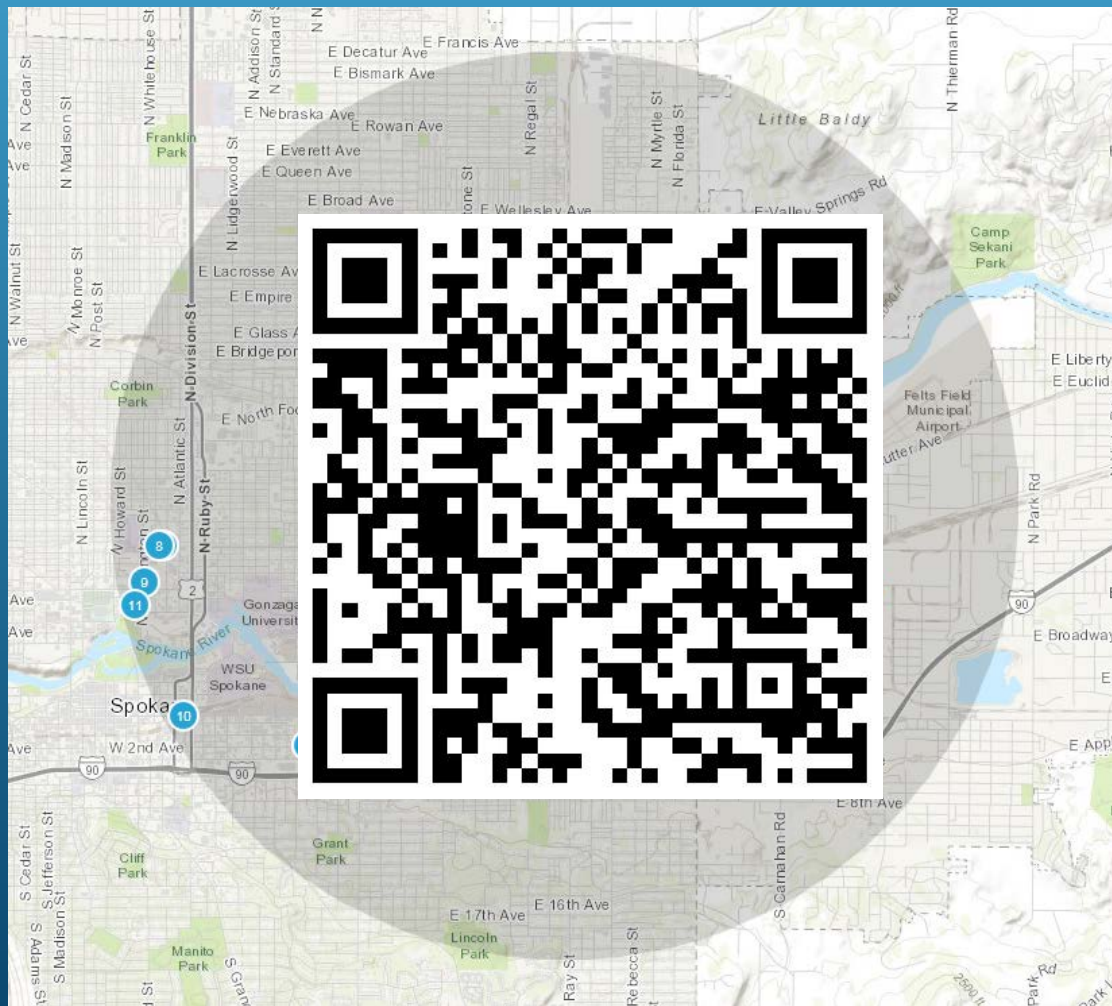
ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS- MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- 3080+ Non-Custodial Parent Referrals (since July 2014)
- 78% of engaged parents removed at least one barrier
- 451+ parents found employment
- 502 modifications Initiated
- 4,243 external barrier removal connections to services
- 2,842,973+ in debt reduction
- 307 Cases Closed





TOOLS FOR PARENTS & PARTNERS



<https://gis.dshs.wa.gov/apps/communityresources>



Questions?

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